

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00

XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-05 CEA-01

AGRE-00 /090 W

-----000924 230827Z /14

R 221617Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5560

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ECON, MILI

SUBJECT: BI-MONTHLY REVIEW

REF: LAGOS 14264, STATE 304280, A-109

SUMMARY OF A-109 BI-MONTHLY REPORT REPEATED BELOW.

BEGIN TEXT. OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER WERE MARKED BY A FURTHER STRENGTHENING IN NIGERIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS ATTRIBUTABLE LARGELY TO THE MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY VISIT OF GENERAL OBASANJO TO THE U.S. AND SUBSEQUENT BILATERAL ECONOMIC DISCUSSIONS IN LAGOS. THE IMPROVEMENT WAS APPARENT IN THE FORM OF CONTINUED NIGERIAN SUPPORT FOR THE ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE ON RHODESIA, A MORE RECEPTIVE ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF NIGERIAN OFFICIALS, AND A PRESS WHICH WAS SOMEWHAT MORE FRIENDLY AND INTERESTED IN MATERIAL ON THE U.S. THE IMPROVED RELATIONSHIP IS STILL A FRAGILE ONE, HOWEVER, AND COULD EASILY TAKE A DOWNWARD TURN IN COMING MONTHS IN THE EVENT OF DISCUOURAGING DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

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THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SCENE WAS DOMINATED BY THE OPENING OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND A NOTICEABLE QUICKENING OF THE POLITICAL PULSE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. THERE WERE SIGNS OF REGIONAL GROUPS EMERGING AND BEGINNING TO TEST THEIR STRENGTH THERE. AN INCREASE IN BACKSTAGE POLITICAL MANEUVERING OF NIGERIAN POLITICIANS TO FORM LOCAL AND NATIONAL ALLIANCES WAS APPARENT AND PRODUCED A CLEARCUT FMG

WARNING THAT IT WOULD CRACK DOWN IF THE VEILS AROUND SUCH ACTIVITY BECAME TOO THIN. ATTEMPTS BY UNION LEADERS TO IGNORE FMG REGULATIONS, AND OVERSTEPPING OF PERMISSIBLE BOUNDARIES OF CRITICISM OF THE FMG BY THE PRESS RESULTING IN DETENTION OF AN EDITOR AND CARTOONIST, WERE ADDITIONAL EVIDENCES OF GROWING IMPATIENCE WITH THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT.

THE OVERALL ECONOMIC SCENE LOOKED SOMEWHAT BLEAKER THAN DURING THE SUMMER. DETERIORATION IN SUCH KEY AREAS AS PHYSICAL SECURITY, FOOD AND POWER DISTRIBUTION, INFLATION, FOREIGN EXCHANGE MOVEMENTS AND THE MORALE OF EXECUTIVES WAS MORE STRIKING THAN THE FEW BRIGHT SPOTS. THE LATTER INCLUDED SOME PROMISE OFFERED BY THE U.S.-NIGERIAN ECONOMIC TALKS BY A SURGE IN KEY CONSTRUCTION AWARDS TO AMERICAN FIRMS AND BY AN IMPRESSIVE ARRAY OF AMERICAN COMPANIES CONTEMPLATING NEW AND EXPANDED INVOLVEMENT. END TEXT.
EASUM

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